

# Conserving calories

"YOU DON'T really feel like playing today, do you?" asked former world champion Tigran Petrosian, of the Soviet Union, just before the start of round three in the Rio interzonal tournament.

"No, not really," replied International Grandmaster Rafael Vaganian, curiously also from the Soviet Union.

"Good," said Petrosian.

And indeed, according to plan they agreed a draw 12 moves later in a Queen's Gambit Declined. What wasn't according to plan, however, was the presence of a talkative Brazilian steward who just happened to speak perfect Russian — unbeknown to the two players of course!

This incident was slightly embarrassing for the Soviets but doesn't really mean anything, even though Petrosian also drew with his other countryman, Yuri Balashov, in 12 moves. It has long been known that the Soviets pre-arrange draws to save energy during long and important tournaments, of which the Rio interzonal, a world championship elimination event, is certainly one. While pre-agreed draws do not exactly conform to the "spirit and moral principles" of the game, there is little that is or can be done about it. Still, it's nice to catch them in the act!

Petrosian has never been one for burning up too many calories of course. Although world champion from 1963 to 1969, he has never really captured the general public's admiration — being often content to settle for draws and high placings rather than going all out to win. Nevertheless, within that 52-year-old, rather pot-bellied Armenian frame is one of the most profound geniuses of all time. His bohemian style, deeply influenced by the great original thinker Aron Nimzovich, is full of mystical prophylactic manoeuvres — and he has a quick tactical brain.

Hungarian Grandmaster Gyula Sax, 28, began poorly in the Rio interzonal, although he returned to form brilliantly a third of the way through the event. In round two he succumbed to Petrosian.

## FRENCH DEFENCE

G. SAX	T. PETROSIAN
1. e4	e6
2. d4	d5
3. Nd2	c5
4. e×d5	e×d5
5. Bb5 ch	Nc6
6. Qe2 ch	Be7
7. d×c5	Nf6
8. Nb3	0-0
9. Nf3	Re8
10. Be3	

The late Estonian GM Paul Keres recommended 10.0-0 B×c5 11.Qd3 Bb6 12.Bg5 with a slight plus for White.

10. . . . a6!

A clever move, forcing the bishop to capture or retreat. Seeing that 11.B×c6 b×c6 12.0-0 a5! threatens both 12...Ba6 and 12...a4, Sax chooses

to retreat — but on a4 the bishop can get hit by a later ...Nc5.

11. Ba4	Ne4
12. 0-0-0	B×c5
13. Nfd4	Bd7
14. N×c6	b×c6
15. Rh1	Bb4
16. Rf1	

Not 16.c3 B×c3.

16. . . .	Qc7
17. Qd3?!	Q×h2!
18. Rh1	Qe5

Petrosian snaffles a pawn and runs away laughing. It would not, however, pay to be too greedy with 18...Q×g2??

19.Rdgl Qf3. 20.R×g7 ch K×g7

21. Bh6 ch winning the queen.	
19. Nd4	Rac8
20. c3	Bd6
21. Bc2	g6
22. Q×a6	Ra8
23. Qd3	

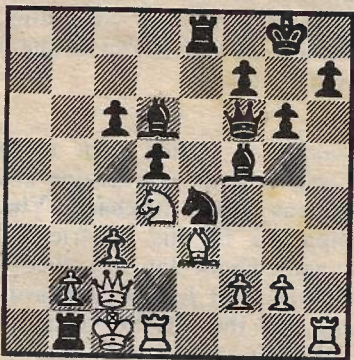
23.Qb7 Nc5 24.Qb6 Reb8 snares White's queen. In the game, Black's infiltration down the a-file, combined with his extra kingside defensive pawn, leaves the outcome in little doubt.

23. . . .	R×a2
24. Bbl	Ral
25. Nc2	Raa8
26. Nd4	Qf6!

Decoying White's knight. On 27.Rdf1 c5 28.Nf3 Bf5 wins in similar fashion to the game continuation.

27. Nf3	Ral
28. Qc2	Bf5
29. Nd4	R×bl chl

Winning more material.



30. Q×bl	N×c3
31. N×f5	N×bl
32. Nh6 ch	Kf8
33. K×bl	Rb8
34. Rd2	Bf4
35. Rh3	B×e3
36. R×e3	Kg7
37. Rf3	Q×f3
38. Resigns.	

38.g×f3 K×h6 liquidates to an easily winning rook endgame for Black.

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